Officers of Indian Embassy in Pakistan

†145. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about the alleged maltreatment meted out to the employees/officers of the Indian Embassy in Pakistan during the last three years till date;

(b) whether the Pakistani authorities have maltreated/exploited the employees/ officers of the Indian Embassy in Pakistan during the last three years;

(c) whether Government have raised this issue at International fora; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The Government is aware that the members of the High Commission of India, Islamabad are subjected to constant surveillance including tailing, at times aggressively, by the intelligence and security personnel of the Government of Pakistan. There has also been one case of illegal confinement of an Indian diplomat for about 5 hours.

(c) and (d) Government of India has taken up the issue with the Government of Pakistan at various levels on several occasions.

GoM to study 'PRASAR BHARTI'

146. SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:
SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Group of Ministers has been appointed to study the future of Prasar Bharti;

(b) if so, the terms of reference of this Group of Minister; and

(c) by when the group is likely to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) Yes, Sir.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Group of Ministers is examining the following issues pertaining to functioning of Prasar Bharti:—

(i) Capital Structures & funding patterns of Prasar Bharti;

(ii) Restoration of Section 22 of the Prasar Bharti Act;

(iii) Continuation of facilities of accommodation health & education to employees until they join Prasar Bharti.

(iv) Financial package & service condition to be offered to the employees for joining Prasar Bharti;

(v) Filling up of Essential category posts in AIR & Doordarshan.

(vi) Amendment, if any, to Prasar Bharti Act, 1990 in the light of working of the Act;

(vii) Transition to commercial Audit and

(viii) Other related issues, if any.

(c) No time frame can be indicated in this regard.

Civil Nuclear Power Expansion Programme

147. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present status of India's civil nuclear power expansion programme indicating whether both Republicans and Democrats strongly support the Indo-US Nuclear deal;

(b) whether the Indian Ambassador in US has reportedly advocated the need for commercial investment in the nuclear energy sector both by Indian investors and by private foreign investors;

(c) whether Prime Minister's scientific advisor has also sought urgent reforms in the existing regulations to allow the private sector in the field of nuclear power; and

(d) if so, Government reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The US Congress is currently considering amendment to US laws to enable full civil nuclear energy cooperation with India. On 26 July 2006, the US House of Representatives passed Bill H.R. 5682 titled "United States and India Nuclear Cooperation Promotion Act of 2006" with a convincing majority of 359-68. On November 16,2006, the US Senate